

1 **Sustainable practices in Viticulture and Winemaking**

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4 **Chapter 13**

5 **Microbiological control of wine production: new tools for new Challenges**

6 **M. Carmen Portillo and Albert Mas**

7 **Dept. Bioquímica i Biotecnologia, Facultat d'Enologia. Universitat Rovira i Virgili.**

8 **43007, Tarragona**

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26 **Abstract**

27 Wine making has evolved since its origins in the Caucasus more than 8000 years
28 ago to a modern scientific and technological discipline. Novel methodologies and
29 practices have been implemented continuously in the elaboration of wines. The
30 industry has been normally keen to accept those developments and incorporate them
31 into their protocols. However, the complexity of some of the new developments, the
32 “return” to old practices driven by some influencing wine makers or opinion-
33 makers, commercial regulations and consumer concerns are growing limitations for
34 the incorporation of new methodologies. This chapter is focused on new microbial

35 methodologies that can be applied to modern winemaking to control the process
36 microbiologically and discuss about the possible challenges of their incorporation.
37 **Key words:** high-throughput sequencing; "omics" technologies; CRISPR/Cas 9;
38 Spontaneous fermentation; SO₂ reduction

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41 **1. Introduction**

42 Alcoholic fermentation (AF) is an essential step to produce any kind of wine in which
43 the sugars present in the grapes (mainly glucose and fructose) are biotransformed by
44 microorganisms to ethanol and carbon dioxide (Ribéreau-Gayon et al., 2006). In
45 addition to sugars, grapes contain other compounds, like amino acids, polyphenols or
46 acids, also susceptible of being metabolized and impact the flavour and aroma of the
47 wine (Pretorius, 2016). The main microorganism of AF is the yeast *Saccharomyces*
48 *cerevisiae* due to its adaptation to the harsh environmental conditions occurring during
49 the winemaking process (low pH, high osmotic pressure, unbalanced concentrations of
50 nutrients, high ethanol concentration, etc.) and its rapid transformation of sugars from
51 the grape must. However, many other microbes including filamentous fungi, yeasts, and
52 bacteria, are present during the winemaking process. The complex and highly diverse
53 microbial communities associated with the fermentation of the grape must are known as
54 wine microbiome.

55 Under certain conditions, some species of yeasts and bacteria can cause spoilage of the
56 wine affecting its quality (Bartowsky, 2009). Wine susceptibility to spoilage depends on
57 the species of yeast and bacteria present and their population size. Additionally, wine
58 physical-chemical characteristics like ethanol content, residual sugar concentration, pH,
59 amount and composition in main acids or oxygen, also condition wine spoilage
60 (Bartowsky, 2009; Loureiro and Malfeito-Ferreira, 2003).

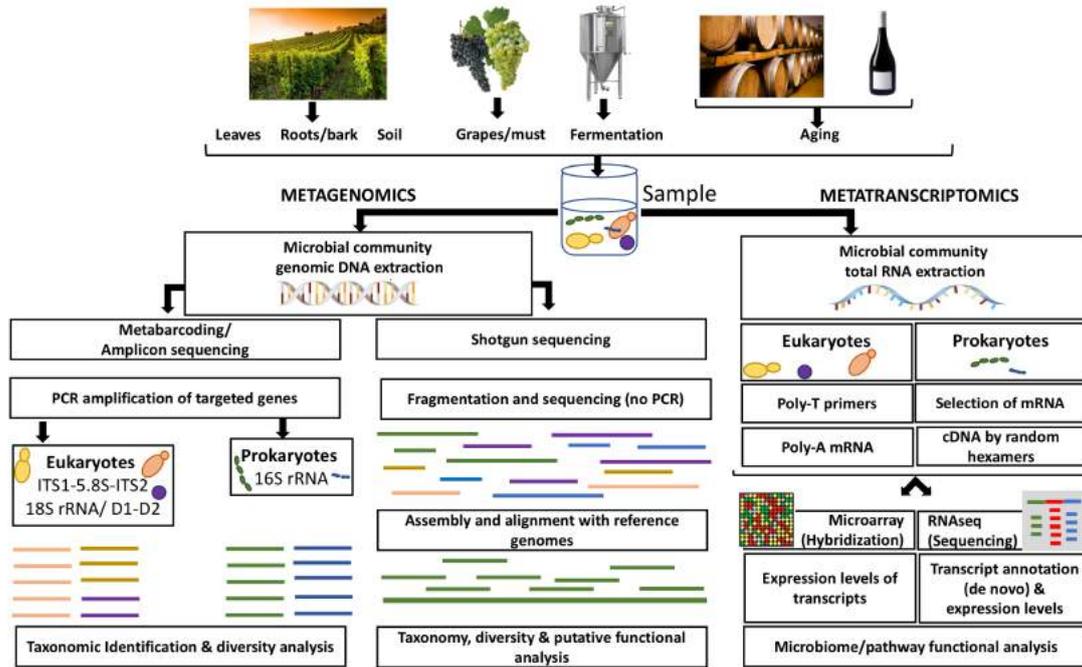
61 The microbiological stability of wine is fundamental to preserve its quality and produce
62 sustainable wines avoiding economical losses. This stability may be achieved using
63 chemical preservatives and/or physical treatments, aimed at killing microorganisms or
64 at least at inhibiting their proliferation, or at physically removing them from wine by
65 filtration. However, these treatments are not specific and may be detrimental for the
66 desirable and beneficial microorganisms during fermentation. Thus, the very first step to
67 control wine microbiome during wine production is to know its composition and its
68 functional attributes.

69 In the last decade, a plethora of studies about wine microbiome have redefined our
70 understanding of the microorganisms involved in the winemaking process. The
71 combination of affordable high-throughput sequencing (HTS) technologies generating
72 large datasets with insightful bioinformatic tools that enable analysis and interpretation
73 of complex patterns has enhanced our understanding of wine microbiome composition
74 and function. In particular, genomics, transcriptomics, metabolomics and proteomics
75 have been broadly implemented to characterize microbial genes, transcripts and
76 proteins, respectively, during wine production (Sirén et al., 2019a).
77 Recent rapid advances in HTS and DNA synthesis techniques are enabling the design
78 and construction of new genes, gene networks and biosynthetic pathways and the
79 redesign of cells and organisms for useful purposes (Pretorius, 2017). Additionally, with
80 the advent of the CRISPR/Cas9 (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic
81 Repeats/CRISPR associated protein 9) genome editing methods, yeast strain
82 engineering has become rapid, efficient and multiplexed (Zhang et al., 2019).
83 This chapter will cover the role and future potential of such recent techniques in the
84 microbial control of wine production and highlight the potential challenges that will be
85 faced.

86 **2. New Tools**

87 **2.1. “Omics” technologies: genomics, metagenomics, transcriptomics, 88 metatranscriptomics, proteomics and metabolomics.**

89 “Omics” technologies are primarily aimed at the universal detection of genes and
90 transcribed genes in a single organism (genomics and transcriptomics, respectively) or
91 in a microbiome (metagenomics and metatranscriptomics, respectively). Additionally,
92 the term “omics” includes the technologies for the study of protein function, structure,
93 and differential expression level (proteomics) and the metabolites generated from
94 cellular processes (metabolomics) in a specific biological sample.



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 96 **Figure 1:** Schematic representation of the workflow followed during metagenomic and
 97 metatranscriptomic analysis from different wine-related samples. Within metabolomics,
 98 the comparison between metabarcoding and shotgun sequencing is presented, whereas
 99 the metatranscriptomics indicates the main differences between microarrays and
 100 RNAseq outputs.

101

102 **Table 13.1.** Summary of omics technologies applied to oenology. The asterisks indicate
 103 bibliographic review about the topic. Due to large number of articles in using
 104 metagenomics only reviews are indicated.

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Omic technology	Target	Aim	References
Metagenomics	DNA	Microbial taxonomic identification, Genes, genetic pathways	Belda et al., 2020* Kioroglou et al., 2018* Stefanini and Cavalieri, 2018*
Metatranscriptomics	Total RNA and mRNA	Gene expression and functions	Alonso-del-Real et al., 2019 Barbosa et al., 2015 Curiel et al., 2017 Rossouw et al., 2015 Sadoudi et al., 2017 Shekhawat et al., 2019 Sunyer-Figueres et al., 2020 Tronchoni et al., 2017
Metaproteomics	Protein	Protein function, structure and differential expression level	González-Jiménez et al., 2020 Mencher et al., 2020 Peng et al., 2019
Metabolomics	Metabolites	Produced metabolites	Alañón et al., 2015 Alves et al., 2015 Arapitsas et al., 2018 Bordet et al., 2020 Cozzolino, 2016 Kioroglou et al., 2020 López-Malo et al., 2013 Mazzei et al., 2013 Peng et al., 2018 Petitgonnet et al., 2019 Richter et al., 2015 Roullier-Gall et al., 2020* Sirén et al., 2019a

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110 The “Omics” analyses offer potential with regards to microbial control of wine
111 production, and they have been applied in a plethora of wine related studies (Figure 1
112 and Table 1). Within the **metagenomics** analysis, the PCR amplification and the later
113 sequencing of gene-marker specific regions is an approach known as metabarcoding or
114 amplicon-based metagenomics. Alternatively, the shotgun sequencing retrieves the
115 information from the whole metagenome of a sample (all genes from all genomes in the
116 community) without including any primer selection and thus, is less biased by the PCR
117 step. In fact, when comparing metabarcoding and shotgun metagenomics analysis of
118 five spontaneous fermentations, metabarcoding analysis biased the overabundance of
119 the genus *Metschnikowia* (Sternes et al., 2017). However, the combination of both
120 metagenomic procedures has demonstrated to be useful to study the influence of
121 vineyard community composition on the fermentation of Riesling and revealed the
122 putative role of *Metschnikowia* as biocontrol agent against bacteria (Sirén et al., 2019b).
123 Metagenomic analysis has created the notion that apart from LAB (Lactic Acid
124 Bacteria) and AAB (Acetic Acid Bacteria), other bacteria, not previously described,
125 may be present during the process (Godálová et al., 2016). Although the possible impact
126 of these newly described bacterial genera is still to be demonstrated, Sirén et al. (2019b)
127 detected an increase of functions assigned to class Actinobacteria at the end of
128 fermentation, pointing to a putative role in winemaking. The metagenomic analysis has
129 been mainly used to describe which microbes are present and relevant in wine-related
130 samples, to reveal the relationship between the microbial communities and the wine
131 terroir (reviewed in Belda et al., 2021), to monitor wine fermentations under different
132 conditions (reviewed in Kioroglou et al., 2018), to relate the microbial communities
133 with wine chemical composition (Bokulich et al., 2016) or to monitor the changes in the
134 grape must and wine microbiota due to vineyard influence and different winemaking
135 practices (Reviewed in Stefanini and Cavalieri, 2018). Another important question that
136 metagenomic analysis has been called to answer, is whether grapes are the source of
137 spoilage microorganisms (Renouf et al., 2005), or the wine-making equipment (Couto et
138 al., 2005). Even though there is no clear answer to this debate, studies from Suárez et al.
139 (2007) and Pinto et al. (2015) seem to support the latter hypothesis.

140 Knowing the composition of the microbial community during wine production is crucial
141 to control it. That is the main reason why the first applications of “omics” techniques to
142 wine research aimed the characterization of the bacterial, yeast and fungal communities.
143 However, revealing the interactions of microbial communities in different stages of the

144 winemaking process and the metabolic pathways involved is of paramount importance
145 to determine the microbial influence in wine quality. In this sense, metatranscriptomics,
146 proteomics and metabolomics are the applied techniques to complement the
147 metagenomics information.

148 One of the concerns that can be raised in metagenomics is that is a technology based on
149 DNA. It is well known the resilience of this molecule and that can be present for long
150 time after the microorganisms are dead. This could lead to an overestimation of the
151 population. Some approaches have been proposed to tackle this aspect: one of them
152 could be the use of RNA (see metatranscriptomics), known to be less stable and thus,
153 could reflect the real live population and another possibility is the use of DNA binding
154 dyes as ethidium monoazide (EMA) and propidium monoazide (PMA), which would
155 prevent the amplification of DNA (Andorrà et al., 2010; Rizzotti et al., 2015; Navarro et
156 al, 2020).

157 **Metatranscriptomics** refers to the measurement of total gene expression in a target
158 sample by extracting messenger RNA (mRNA) and then converting it to cDNA using
159 random hexamers or, in the case of Eukaryotes, poly-T primers that target the poly-A
160 mRNA tail (Zepeda-Mendoza et al., 2018). This analysis gives information about the
161 gene activity of the target organisms within the sample (Belda et al., 2017; De Filippis
162 et al., 2018). Analyses can also be performed using stable isotope probing targeting an
163 specific microbial group in the samples to enrich its transcriptome and then using the
164 RNASeq in NGS platforms (Dumont et al., 2013). RNA-seq is the methodology that
165 recently has become predominant in metatranscriptomics studies because it offers
166 several advantages over microarrays. However, recent studies comparing both
167 techniques pointed to the high consistence between both platforms, encouraging the use
168 of microarray as a versatile tool for differential gene expression analysis (Nookaew et
169 al., 2012). The metatranscriptomics analysis has been extensively used in wine research
170 in recent years to elucidate, for example, interactions between microorganisms during
171 wine alcoholic fermentation (Alonso-del-Real et al., 2019; Barbosa et al., 2015; Curiel
172 et al., 2017), the effect of different stresses over gene transcription in wine
173 microorganisms (Shekhawat et al., 2019; Tronchoni et al., 2017) or even to reveal the
174 protective role of some compounds during the oxidative stress of wine yeasts (Sunyer-
175 Figueres et al., 2020). Complete metabolic pathways are affected by altered gene
176 expression, as shown by Sadoudi et al. (2017) with a change in acetic acid and glycerol
177 metabolism in *S. cerevisiae* in the presence of *Metschnikowia pulcherrima*.

178 Furthermore, in the case of direct cell contact between two populations of distinct
179 species, a change in the expression of FLO genes has been described, leading to a
180 modification of population dynamics (Rossouw et al., 2015). The main challenge of the
181 interpretation of the metatranscriptomics results during the study of yeast interactions, is
182 that the growth of yeasts in mixed fermentations may be affected by several factors
183 other than the specific used strains, as for example, the grape must composition, nutrient
184 limitations, or fermentation temperature. All these factors should be considered to
185 extrapolate the results from this analysis.

186 **Metaproteomics** is the identification and quantification of the expressed proteins in any
187 matrix, which improves the functional gene annotations and provides better
188 understanding of the microorganism interactions within that matrix. Generally, all mass
189 spectrometry-based proteomic workflows comprise first the isolation of proteins from
190 their source and can be further fractionated. After digestion, the peptides are analyzed
191 by mass-spectrometry qualitatively and quantitatively. Then, the large amount of
192 generated data is analyzed by appropriate software tools to deduce the amino acid
193 sequence and, if applicable, to quantify the proteins in a sample. Recently, Peng et al.
194 (2019) evaluated the proteomic response of *S. cerevisiae* during alcoholic fermentation
195 when it was co-inoculated with *Lachancea thermotolerans*. Additionally,
196 metaproteomics could be used to investigate the transcription of taste-active peptides in
197 wine (González-Jiménez et al., 2020) or the possible involvement of extracellular
198 vesicles in the complexity of wine sensory features (Mencher et al., 2020). Similarly to
199 metatranscriptomics analysis, the biggest limitation of the metaproteomics technology is
200 to evaluate the effect of the external factors over the results during of the
201 experimentation making difficult the prediction of the transcriptome under the semi-
202 industrial or industrial scale.

203 **Metabolomics** approaches aim to identify and quantify multiple metabolites or
204 chemical compounds in a single matrix using nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) or
205 mass spectrometry-based methods (Cozzolino, 2016; Sirén et al., 2019a). Metabolomics
206 data can provide general proof of gene function and complement the information
207 gathered through metagenomics and transcriptomics studies. Both volatile and non-
208 volatile metabolites can be studied in either targeted or non-targeted fashion. It is
209 known that environmental factors and winemaking decisions have a strong impact on
210 the microbial metabolic profiles and metabolomics is useful in the investigation of
211 dynamics between microbial communities and the matrix (Cozzolino, 2016).

212 Metabolomics has already been applied to wine production to study questions ranging
213 from the cultivar differences, monitoring of the fermentation process and guiding of
214 winemaking decision making, as well as the exploration of aroma and flavor variation
215 by vintage (Alañón et al., 2015; Arapitsas et al., 2018) or ageing conditions (Kioroglou
216 et al., 2020). The literature includes various studies in which the specific composition of
217 wine enables distinguishing between wines on the basis of fermentations with different
218 yeast species and strains (Alves et al., 2015; López-Malo et al., 2013; Mazzei et al.,
219 2013) and with single and co-cultures (Peng et al., 2018; Petitgonnet et al., 2019;
220 Richter et al., 2015). Significant metabolic changes have been identified at each stage of
221 the fermentation studied (Peng et al., 2018; Richter et al., 2015) highlighting that
222 sampling time is an essential point for understanding interaction phenomena (reviewed
223 in Bordet et al., 2020). Furthermore, some studies explore the differences between the
224 endometabolome and the exometabolome associated with microorganisms involved in
225 fermentation processes (Richter et al., 2015). It should also be noted that the
226 identification of compounds detected during the metabolic profiling of wine remains
227 difficult at present due to the incomplete that databases that frequently do not allow
228 identifying all the biomarkers (Roullier-Gall et al., 2020).

229 **2.2. Genome Editing: CRISPR/Cas9**

230 The CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing tool has been successfully implemented both in
231 *Saccharomyces* and non-*Saccharomyces* genome modification attempts and it is evident
232 it will become more routine (Raschmanová et al., 2018). In short, CRISPR/Cas9
233 involves utilizing the natural mechanism that has been described in bacteria and archaea
234 to develop a tool capable of conducting precise genome editing of any organism. Most
235 CRISPR/Cas9 editing systems require two components i.e., a guide RNA, which is a
236 chimeric RNA molecule, and an RNA-guided DNA endonuclease like Cas9. Part of the
237 guide RNA is bound by the Cas9 and directs it to the complementary genomic DNA
238 region causing a double strand break upstream of a protospacer adjacent region (that in
239 the case of the commonly-used Cas9 from *Streptococcus pyogenes*, it is
240 an NGG sequence). A double strand break would often be lethal for an organism if not
241 repaired rapidly. The endogenous repair machineries allow for the introduction of a
242 variety of genomic modifications. This tool has been fine-tuned and streamlined for
243 yeast DNA editing (Jakočiunas et al., 2016; Weninger et al., 2018). Advantages of a
244 CRISPR/Cas9 tool include that changing the target locus can be done simply by
245 modifying a 20-bp sequence of the guide RNA and, once supplied with an appropriate

246 repair template, large insertions and deletions can be done. Also, the selection marker
 247 can easily be removed from the resulting strain, a great concern for any genetic
 248 modification in food applications. The genetic modification of wine strains of
 249 *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* has shown tremendous potential in improving many
 250 oenological aspects albeit mostly restricted to laboratory level (Van Wyk et al., 2019),
 251 as summarized in Table 2.

252 Table 13.2: Recent applications of the CRISPR-Cas9 technique in *Saccharomyces*
 253 *cerevisiae* to improve some aspects of wine making.
 254

Wine making Goal	Gene edited	Result	Reference
Reduction of urea	<i>CAN1</i> (arginine permease)	25-40% urea reduction	Vigentini et al., 2017
Reduction of urea and ethyl carbamate	<i>DUR3</i> (Urea transporter)	92% urea reduction 52% Ethyl carbamate	Wu et al., 2020
Fermentation of high sugar concentration and glycerol production	<i>STL1</i> (Sugar transporter)	Low fermentation activity, increased glycerol	Muysson et al., 2019
High glycerol production	<i>GPD1</i> (glycerol 3- phosphate dehydrogenase)	High production of glycerol	van Wyk et al., 2020
Aroma production (esters and acetates)	<i>ACT1</i> (alcohol acetyltransferase)	High concentration of several acetates	van Wyk et al., 2020

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 256 Wine yeasts are known to produce a broad array of compounds, not all of them with a
 257 positive character in wines. One of them is the generation of urea that can combine with
 258 ethanol and produce the carcinogenic compound ethyl carbamate. This has been the
 259 target of the first application of this technique in wine yeast. Vigentini et al. (2017) have
 260 eliminated the arginine permeases pathway (the *CAN1* gene) to reduce urea production
 261 in two different commercial strains of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. They have obtained
 262 reductions between 20 and 35%, depending on the strain. Reduction of urea has also
 263 been obtained by a different strategy using also the CRISPR-Cas9 editing tool:
 264 overexpression of the *DUR3* gene (Urea active transporter, Wu et al., 2020). They
 265 observed that the modified *S. cerevisiae* also reduced the level of urea by 92% and those
 266 of ethyl carbamate by 52% in Chinese rice wine.

267 Another successful application has focused on the glycerol response to high sugar
 268 concentration that is required in yeast fermenting special wines with this high sugar
 269 content. In this case, Muysson et al. (2019) deleted the functional *STL1* gene to analyze
 270 their effect in ice-wine fermentations and the resulting mutant yeasts presented reduced
 271 fermentation performance and elevated concentrations of glycerol and acetic acid,

272 compared to parental strains. It has to be emphasized that genes involved in ethanol and
273 glycerol modulation will be the target for genetic modifications, in order to get wines
274 with reduced alcohol content (Goold et al., 2017). In the same pathway (production of
275 glycerol), van Wyk et al. (2020) overexpressed the gene GPD1 (Glycerol 3-phosphate
276 dehydrogenase) by changing the promoter. The resulting strain had significantly higher
277 production of glycerol but also acetic acid than the parental strain. In the same work,
278 they also focused on the production of aromas (acetate esters), overexpressing alcohol
279 acetyltransferase (*ACT1*). The double mutant had also increased levels of glycerol, and
280 very high concentrations of the different acetates analyzed (ethyl acetate, isoamyl
281 acetate, isobutyl acetate, phenylethyl acetate, hexyl acetate).
282 However, this technique is open to be used to many other non-*Saccharomyces* yeasts
283 (Raschmanová et al., 2018). So far, its application to other yeast has been mostly for
284 other applications (production of products with pharmaceutical or nutrition interest, or
285 production of biofuel, for instance). Only the wine related yeast *Brettanomyces*
286 *bruxellensis* has been successfully modified (Varela et al., 2020). However, the
287 applicability of this modification is mostly in the brewing, as *Brettanomyces* is used for
288 the development of some beer aromas.

289 Another interest in genome modification is to expand on the aroma-producing
290 capabilities of wine yeast. This includes overexpressing genes involved in the synthesis
291 of esters like the alcohol acetyltransferases 1 and 2, which promote increased
292 condensation between alcohols and acetyl-CoA resulting in more acetate esters being
293 produced (see above, work of van Wyk et al., 2020).

294 Despite some drawbacks, the value of the CRISPR/Cas9 tool in generating wine yeast
295 strains remains largely unexploited. Of the current genome editing tools available,
296 CRISPR/Cas9-based editing have been shown to be the most adaptable, versatile, and
297 cost-effective. This methodology has opened a new era for the improvement and genetic
298 modification of the wine yeasts. The process should be seen in two different ways, on
299 one side to improve the knowledge acquisition but in another to improve wine quality.
300 It is evident, though, consumer acceptance to these methodologies requires still a
301 communicative effort with educational purposes from researchers and innovators.
302 Legislation will probably follow the consumer's concerns but, most interestingly, it
303 should be shifted to food safety, clearly stating the benefits and risks of using this
304 methodology.

305 **3. New Challenges**

306 **3.1. Grape microbiome and its control**

307 Grape berries harbor a wide range of microbes including bacteria, fungi and yeasts
308 originated from the vineyard environment (Zarraonaindia et al., 2015), many of which
309 are recognized for their role in the must fermentation process shaping wine quality.
310 Experimental analyses suggest that microbes colonizing berries could significantly
311 affect grapevine and fruit health and development (Barata et al., 2012). Furthermore,
312 grape microbiome also contribute to shaping phenotypic characteristics, such as flavor,
313 color, and sugar content (Belda et al., 2017) thus influencing the winemaking process as
314 well (Capozzi et al., 2015).

315 HTS techniques have being used to characterize bacterial communities of the grapevine
316 plant (Belda et al., 2021) and to assess the provenance of some microbial groups
317 (Bokulich et al., 2013; Zarraonaindia et al., 2015). It has been revealed that soil serves
318 as a primary source of microorganisms with edaphic factors influencing the native
319 grapevine microbiome (Zarraonaindia et al., 2015) and that the grape microbiome
320 biogeography is non-randomly associated with regional, varietal, and climatic factors
321 across multiscale viticultural zones (Bokulich et al., 2014). Moreover, Bokulich et al.
322 (2016b) suggested a strong association involving grapevine microbiota, fermentation
323 characteristics and wine chemical composition. The beneficial effect of certain
324 microbial taxa on host plants as growth promoters and stress resistance inducers has
325 been reported in several articles and some of them addressed their influence on grape
326 and wine quality (Huang et al., 2018; Yang et al., 2016). Thus, the control of the grape
327 microbiome through physic, chemical or biological treatment of the grapevine to
328 promote certain taxa could affect both the health of the plant and the quality of the wine.
329 Since microbiome metabolism can contribute to that of the plant host and the
330 biochemical composition of its fruits, the nature of grapevine microbiome taxa
331 identities, ecological attitudes, potential toxicity, and clinical relevance are all aspects
332 worthy of a thorough investigation and the new technologies and tools explained in the
333 section 2 are the most promising right now.

334 **3.2.Reduction of SO₂ use**

335 Sulfites are considered the main additives in winemaking for their antimicrobial and
336 antioxidant activities. The most important role of this compound lies in its antimicrobial
337 action against acetic and lactic acid bacteria, and molds to prevent spoilage and to
338 determine the microbiological stabilization of wines to enhance aging potential.
339 Furthermore, sulfur dioxide (SO₂) addition prior to the onset of alcoholic fermentation

340 also exerts a selective antimicrobial activity against spoilage yeasts, by inhibiting their
341 growth and promoting the rapid development of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. The current
342 concern about the potential negative effects of SO₂ on consumer health has motivated
343 the interest on replacing or reducing SO₂ use. Thus, research is focused on looking for
344 other preservatives and innovative technologies, harmless to health, to reduce SO₂
345 content in wine. Recently, numerous alternatives have been proposed to replace the
346 activity of SO₂ by the use of chemical additives and physical treatments, aimed at the
347 microbiological stability of wine (reviewed by Lisanti et al., 2019).

348 There are many different chemical solutions (antimicrobial compounds), some of them
349 approved by the EU authorities and/or OIV legislation. The most used chemical
350 alternative to SO₂ is the Dimethyl Dicarbonate (DMDC), which is active on the
351 inhibition of some microbial critical enzymes and is hydrolyzed to CO₂ and methanol. It
352 kills yeast cells almost immediately and later the residue is minimal, without any health
353 concern (Ribéreau-Gayon et al., 2006). The effectiveness of DMDC could be
354 jeopardized in musts with high microbial load, but it is considered very effective in final
355 wines, especially sweet and semisweet wines, once the viable load of microorganisms is
356 reduced (Bartowsky, 2009) The effect on bacteria is more limited, and when bacteria is
357 the main microbial problem, the use of lysozyme could be another alternative.

358 Lysozyme acts by hydrolysis of the cell wall in gram positive bacteria (for instance
359 lactic acid bacteria) but it does not have any action against gram negative bacteria (such
360 acetic acid bacteria) or yeast. Sorbic acid has been traditionally used in the food
361 industry as antifungal compound and in wines has been considered effective to inhibit
362 refermentation by *S. cerevisiae* in bottled sweet wines (Zoecklein et al., 1995) and
363 towards the growth of film-forming yeasts (*Candida* spp.) on the wine surface
364 (Ribéreau-Gayon et al., 2006). Nowadays it is hardly used for its limited effect and the
365 possible negative effects on consumer's health. Some of these treatments are not really
366 alternatives because of their limited microbial effects but are recommended to be used
367 together to reduce the SO₂ dosage (Ribéreau-Gayon et al., 2006).

368 Some other additives, also common in winemaking for other reasons are also known to
369 have some antimicrobial action against wine spoilage microorganisms. Among them,
370 we can mention the phenolic compounds (Silva et al., 2018) or chitosan (Ferreira et al.,
371 2013; Valera et al., 2017). Due to the interest to reduce or eliminate the use of SO₂,
372 many other compounds are being tested, although they are not yet authorized in the EU.
373 Among them, we can mention nisin, basically for the treatments against Lactic Acid

374 Bacteria (Rojo-Bezares et al., 2007), silver nanomaterials, active against yeasts, LAB
375 and AAB (Garde-Cerdán et al., 2014) or hydroxytyrosol active also against the three
376 kinds of wine microorganisms (Ruiz-Moreno et al., 2015). Finally, saturated short-chain
377 fatty acids were also used to control the growth of some spoilage yeasts (Ribéreau-
378 Gayon et al., 2006).

379 An option that is gaining interest is the use of some microorganisms able to inhibit the
380 growth of other microorganisms through several mechanisms, among them, cell-to-cell
381 contact (Nissen and Arneborg, 2003) or antimicrobial peptides (Albergaria et al., 2010).
382 This option is named as biocontrol. In fact, it has been described that the interaction
383 between yeasts induces the Viable But Not Culturable states as a mechanism to
384 overgrow the other yeasts and take over the alcoholic fermentation (Branco et al., 2015;
385 Wang et al., 2016). Even *S. cerevisiae* can enter this state in presence of other non-
386 *Saccharomyces* species (Navarro et al., 2020). Thus, biocontrol, or the use of certain
387 yeasts to limit the growth of others is a very attractive line of research.

388 Furthermore, some other alternatives for microbial stabilization have been considered,
389 mostly physical treatments. Among them, microfiltration is probably the most useful at
390 cellar level. However, several concerns have been raised regarding wine quality as
391 microfiltration will also remove colorant matter other macromolecules and even volatile
392 compounds, which will be very detrimental for wine quality due to its sensory impact
393 (Lisanti et al., 2019). Thermal treatments are also a possibility, although their impact on
394 sensory attributes limits its application to low quality wines exclusively (Ribéreau-
395 Gayon et al., 2006). Other physical methods, such as high hydrostatic pressure,
396 ultrasound, pulsed electric fields, ultraviolet irradiation, and microwave, successfully
397 used in the last few years for the microbiological stabilization of wine as alternative to
398 the use of SO₂ should be considered still far from a routine use in cellars.

399 Although exhibiting a certain microbial inhibition, no physical or chemical treatment
400 has to date shown to be able to replace the efficiency and the broad spectrum of
401 antimicrobial action of SO₂ (Santos et al., 2012). Thus, the main challenge when
402 reducing SO₂ or substituting it by chemical compounds or physical treatments would be
403 the microbial control during and after fermentation in addition to the control of the
404 organoleptic properties of the produced wine.

405 The improvement of the tools for microbial monitoring described in the previous
406 sections, could be good help for the microbial control. However, those tools are still far
407 from being useful at cellar level, as they are costly, time-consuming and with complex

408 interpretation. Adequation of those methodologies to cellar level is far from being
409 practical, although it might be a research and transfer objective.

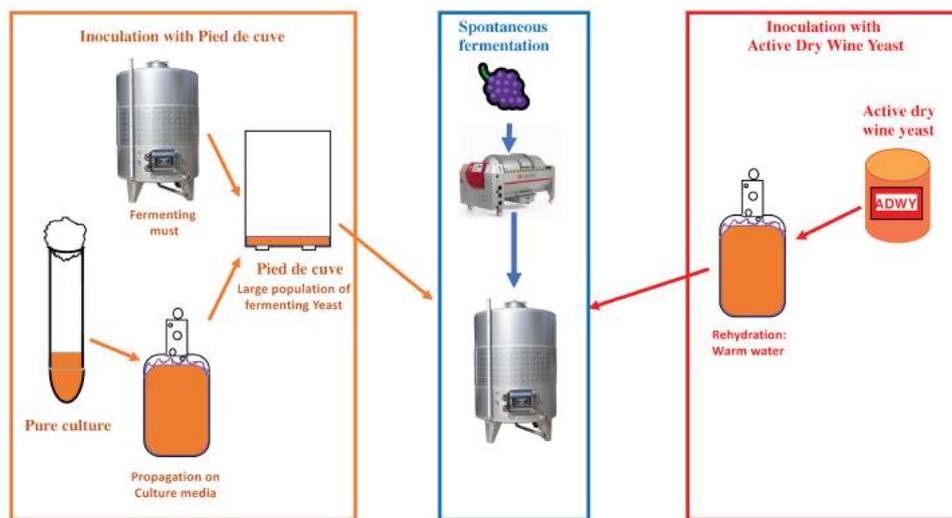
410 **3.3.Spontaneous vs inoculated fermentations**

411 Traditionally, alcoholic fermentations have proceeded spontaneously, with the
412 microbiota that was already present on the grapes or resident in the winery. The
413 spontaneous fermentations are normally slow and with unpredictable outcome, as it
414 depends on the microbiota present and its capability to overcome the other yeasts. The
415 wine is normally considered that reflects the “terroir” typicality, but it might have many
416 risks of spoilage. The control of all fermentative processes is normally done by starter
417 cultures, that could be from a fermenting substrate or pure microbiological cultures.
418 Thus, in wine making we might have spontaneous fermentation (without any starter
419 culture) or inoculated fermentations when a starter is used.

420 Either a fermenting substrate or from pure microbiological culture the inoculation has
421 been traditionally done by pied-de-cuve. In those cases, the name comes from the
422 “bottom of the deposit” that means that a 5-10 % of the total volume of the deposit is
423 filled with an actively fermenting must and the rest of the deposit is filled up with fresh
424 must. In this way, as the fermenting must has a very high concentration of yeast that are
425 very active (typically could be between 10^7 - 10^8 cells/ml) could easily take over the
426 fermentation of the whole deposit (the population reduction of one log unit is not
427 relevant, as yeasts are already active and growing). With this mechanism the
428 winemakers ensure a quick fermentation start and a good rate. If the pied-de-cuve is
429 derived from a single culture (normally a selected yeast strain), this yeast must be
430 propagated in optimal culture medium until it achieves a volume that can be used as
431 pied-de-cuve. Often the last passages are done with must either sterilized or with low
432 indigenous population. In this way, the selected strain will take over the fermentation
433 and provide the final wine with the characteristics that the strain can develop in the
434 wine, although this is not the case with the pied-de-cuve from fermenting vats, as they
435 are the result of a mixed inoculum. However, the propagation needs a laboratory where
436 minimal sterile conditions could be kept as well as it is a slow process that may take
437 several days.

438 During the last Century many different strains of *S. cerevisiae* have been selected to be
439 used as starter cultures to repress the wild microorganisms and achieve more predictable
440 and desired outcomes. A big step forward in the use of starter cultures was the
441 development of the Active Dry Wine Yeasts, where yeasts are dehydrated maintaining

442 their full activity, that is restored quickly after rehydration (Fleet, 1993). This must be
 443 considered a cellar-friendly procedure, as yeasts could be rehydrated in less than 30
 444 minutes in the same cellar, facilitating the seeding of high numbers of yeast cells that
 445 are fully active and can initiate the alcoholic fermentation quickly and effectively. In
 446 this way, the fermentation proceeds very fast and with good fermentation rate (Figure
 447 2).



448
 449 Figure 2: Inoculated and spontaneous alcoholic fermentations.

450
 451 However, these inoculated fermentations present the risk of uniformity, as selected
 452 yeasts provide a limited diversity of the final wines (Fleet, 1993). Against this
 453 “uniformization” several strategies have been in use: selection of local yeasts or mixed
 454 inoculation with selected non-*Saccharomyces* yeast. Recent movements of non-
 455 conventional wine making (organic, biodynamic, natural, etc.) have challenged the use
 456 of Active Dry Yeast. A good alternative in these cases could be the use of pied-de-cuve
 457 that can be derived from small volumes of fermenting early musts that could be selected
 458 according to some variables (good fermentation activity and good sensory attributes),
 459 although the microbiological control will not be optimal, as there will be a mixed
 460 microbial population.

461 Grapes harbor a complex microbial community of fungi, bacteria and between 10^4 - 10^6
462 yeasts cells per gram of grapes (Fleet, 2003), which are mainly non-*Saccharomyces*
463 yeasts. The populations of *Saccharomyces* are indeed very low in grapes (Beltran et al.,
464 2002). These populations change when they enter in contact with the cellar environment
465 where they join the resident microbiota. In fact, the cellar is a good niche for *S.*
466 *cerevisiae*, which becomes the main cellar-resident yeast (Beltran et al., 2002).
467 Although the grape must is a very complex medium and can provide support for many
468 different microorganisms, there are some characteristics that transform such universal
469 medium into a very restrictive one. The high sugar concentration, that derives in high
470 osmotic pressure and low water activity; the high concentration of organic acids, with
471 pH between 3 and 4 and the unbalance between nitrogen carbon sources makes the
472 grape must a very selective medium. Thus, the initial grape juice only supports the
473 growth of certain microbial species favoring the development of fermentative yeasts.
474 Overall, species of *Hanseniaspora*, *Candida* and *Metschnikowia* genera begin the
475 fermentation process. Species of *Pichia*, *Issatchenkia* and *Kluyveromyces* can also
476 develop during this stage. These yeasts species may grow up to 10^6 - 10^7 cfu / mL of
477 must until mid-fermentation when their population sharply decay. At this moment, *S.*
478 *cerevisiae* becomes predominant, reaching populations of 10^7 - 10^8 cfu / mL, until the
479 fermentation is completed. Nevertheless, the microbial succession occasionally can lead
480 to stuck or sluggish fermentations as a result of an excessive proliferation of non-
481 fermentative yeasts that consume nutrients needed for the development of the
482 fermentative ones (Ciani et al., 2006; Medina et al., 2012; Padilla et al., 2016).
483 Thus, the inoculation of *Saccharomyces* starters is a tool for the wine maker to define
484 wine production and quality. However, this practice leads to the uniformity of the
485 produced wines and some new tendencies in winemaking tend to prevent the use of
486 standard commercial starters. In fermentations without use of starters (spontaneous
487 fermentations), the native microbiota, mostly non-*Saccharomyces*, proliferate for
488 several days, producing different compounds that could improve the organoleptic
489 quality of the wines, although it also includes a risk of spoilage and sluggish or stuck
490 fermentations. The improvement has been correlated to the presence of interesting
491 enzymatic activities, some of them of technological interest (pectinolytic activities that
492 facilitate procedures in the cellar) or to improve the final wine (esterases, beta-
493 glucosidase, etc.) (Jolly et al., 2014). Additionally, these Non-*Saccharomyces* yeast may
494 be able to reduce ethanol (Gonzalez et al., 2013), which has been proposed as a key

495 objective in current winemaking due to the increased concentration of sugars, among
496 other effects, derived from climate change (Mira de Orduña, 2010). Nevertheless, the
497 return to spontaneous wine fermentations may have considerable drawbacks especially
498 in terms of economic losses, as these wines have much higher risks of presenting
499 different levels of spoilage (presence of unwanted compounds that will be
500 organoleptically detectable) that will not be acceptable for the consumer. Alternative
501 microbial starters used in mixed or sequential fermentations, mainly non-
502 *Saccharomyces*, have received increasing attention for their potential to produce wines
503 with more distinctive and typical features (Jolly et al., 2014). This topic will be covered
504 in the next section.

505 In order to take advantages of both inoculated and spontaneous fermentations and to
506 improve certain wine characteristics, mixed and sequential fermentations using *S.*
507 *cerevisiae* and different yeast strains or malolactic bacteria have attracted recent
508 research interest (reviewed in Petruzzi et al., 2017). For example, it has been shown that
509 *Torulaspora delbrueckii* enhances the complexity and fruity notes of wines (Renault et
510 al., 2015) *Hanseniaspora vineae* enriches wines with fruity and flowery aromas (Lleixà
511 et al., 2016b), *Lachancea thermotolerans* increases the total acidity (Gobbi et al., 2013)
512 and *Metschnikowia pulcherrima* reduces the ethanol levels and enhances varietal
513 aromas (Medina et al., 2012; Quirós et al., 2014). The increasing number of species
514 used, often associated to new isolations from spontaneous fermentations (Garofalo et
515 al., 2015; Padilla et al., 2016) introduces a relevant challenge in terms of interspecific
516 interactions (Ciani and Comitini, 2015; Tronchoni et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2016). For
517 example, to optimize the use of non-*Saccharomyces* yeasts or bacteria in mixed or
518 sequential fermentations with *Saccharomyces* spp., is necessary to better understand
519 their metabolism and nutrient requirements. During a sequential inoculation, the initial
520 consumption of nutrients by non-*Saccharomyces* yeasts could affect the growth and
521 survival of *Saccharomyces* yeasts, inoculated later (Lleixà et al., 2016a; Medina et al.,
522 2012; Roca-Mesa et al., 2020). Furthermore, we have to consider that different grape
523 varieties and batch volumes could influence the growth and final biomass of yeasts in
524 mixed fermentations (Gobbi et al., 2013; Padilla et al., 2017). Thus, the field of
525 interspecific interactions is of particular interest and necessary to scale from laboratory
526 to industrial or semi-industrial scale.

527 **3.4.The search for new strains**

528 More than two hundred commercial strains of wine yeast available on the market are
529 used by winemakers to produce different types, varieties, and brands of wines.
530 However, due to the highly competitive wine market with new demands for improved
531 wine quality, it has become increasingly critical to develop new wine strains (Bisson,
532 2004).

533 Besides the isolations of new species of yeasts mainly from spontaneous fermentations
534 (Garofalo et al., 2015; Padilla et al., 2016; Torija et al., 2001), the new genetic tools
535 allow the metabolic engineering of known strains. Classical strain improvement
536 methods based on the repeated alternation of successive stages of mutagenesis and
537 selection have frequently been used to obtain starter cultures of wine strains (Steensels
538 et al., 2014). These methods are quite lengthy and time-consuming because require
539 screening of a significant number of isolates. In fact, they have now been replaced by
540 adaptive or directed laboratory evolution methods (ALE) which are more targeted and
541 convenient (Sandberg et al., 2019). ALE technique is based on the selection of
542 candidate strains through serial or continuous culturing of a particular yeast strain for
543 many generations under selective pressure (i.e. high ethanol or high osmolarity) and has
544 been applied successfully in previous studies (Betlej et al., 2020; Kutyna et al., 2012;
545 McBryde et al., 2006).

546 Recently, novel methodologies for precise wine strain engineering based on better
547 molecular knowledge have emerged due to the rapid progress in genomic studies with
548 wine yeast strains, especially in *S. cerevisiae* strains (reviewed in Eldarov and
549 Mardanov, 2020). An example of this new approaches would be the CRISPR/Cas9 tool.
550 Nevertheless, when taking in consideration the real commercial implementation of all
551 these and other advances, a barrier arises: engineered yeasts are usually considered
552 genetically modified organisms (GMO) and legal issues impede its use. To the best of
553 our knowledge, so far only two strains have been allowed for commercial
554 implementation (Coulon et al., 2006; Husnik et al., 2006) although they are not
555 extendedly used. In the European Union, Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 sets the legislation
556 on genetically modified food and feed and postpone the use of GMO until better times.

557 **4. Concluding Remarks**

558 Wine making is characterized for being a microbiological driven process where the
559 biological control is a requirement for safety, reproducibility, and consumer acceptance.
560 Although the process is open to incorporate the new tools that have been developed in
561 recent years, the winemaker and consumer reluctance to some of those novelties as well

562 as the reality of the cellars and the technological and expertise requirements of some of
563 these methodologies makes their use in cellars still very limited. For instance, massive
564 sequencing could be a very helpful methodology to monitor fermentations or post
565 fermentative processes (aging, for instance) as well as safety control of the product.
566 However, present development, costs, expertise, and timing makes their cellar
567 application almost inviable. On the other hand, the use of CRISPR-Cas9 methodology
568 that could generate mutant strains that incorporate wine making improvements (for
569 instance reduction of urea and ethyl carbamate, increase of glycerol, reduced ethanol,
570 improved aromatic expression) face the challenge of being considered GM and thus, the
571 consumer rejection or the regulation limitation.

572

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577

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910

911 **Legends to Figures:**

912 **Figure 1:** Schematic representation of the workflow followed during metagenomic and
913 metatranscriptomic analysis from different wine-related samples. Within metabolomics,
914 the comparison between metabarcoding and shotgun sequencing is presented, whereas
915 the metatranscriptomics indicates the main differences between microarrays and
916 RNAseq outputs.

917

918 **Figure 2:** Inoculated and spontaneous alcoholic fermentations.

919